



City of West St. Paul Rental Licensing Program

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQ)

****NEW ORDINANCE CHANGES EFFECTIVE 1-1-2012** (#1-5)**

1. Can I Rent My Home with the New Single-Family Rental Density Restrictions?

Effective January 1, 2012, in an R1 zoning district, no more than ten percent (10%) of the single-family lots on any block shall be eligible to obtain a rental license, unless a Provisional License is granted by City Council. An up to date Rental Density Map is located on the City Website at www.wspmn.gov on the Rental Licensing Page. View the map prior to renting or purchasing property with intent to rent to verify if the block where the property is located has met its maximum rental capacity. Or, call 651-552-4144 to verify capacity.

2. How do I Obtain a Provisional License?

Properties in districts that exceed the permitted # of rentals can obtain a Provisional license limited to two years if the Owner uses a Property Management firm licensed with the MN Commerce Department and are approved by Council. Mark Provisional on Page 2 & enter property management firm contact in Section D on the Rental License Application.

3. Can I Rent More than Three (3) Single-Family Rentals?

Rental owners are limited to license no more than (3) single-family residences as rental, unless the Owner hires a property management firm licensed by the Commerce Dept., is a public housing agency, or obtains City Council approval.

4. Do I Need a Rental License for a Contract for Deed Property?

Contracts for deed must be recorded against the property or the property will be deemed rental, requiring a license.

5. Do I Need to Use A Crime Free Lease Addendum?

All licensed rental owners must use the MN Crime-Free Lease addendum or its equivalent, as part of its leases.

6. What is the Rental Licensing Program?

The Rental Licensing Program consists of several parts as follows:

- Rental Application (per building) & Initial Background Check of property owner, partner or Corporate Officer
- Inspections by a Housing Evaluator licensed with the City of West St. Paul or through an Alternative Inspection
- City Council Approval of the Rental License
- STAR Program

7. What is Rental Property?

Single-family, duplex, triplex, four-plex, apts, condominiums, townhomes or another residential rental dwelling that is used for residential rental occupancy by one or more persons who are not the owner or a member of the owner's family.

8. Why License Rental Units?

To "protect the public health, safety and welfare of citizens of the City... and to correct substandard conditions and maintain a standard for existing and newly constructed Rental Dwellings in the City."

9. How do I obtain a Rental License to Rent Property in WSP?

Rental Owners must complete the following to **rent single & multi-family** property in WSP:

- Fill out a Rental License Application (per building) and STAR Program Application,
- Have an Inspection of the building completed by a Housing Evaluator licensed with the City or submit an Alternative Inspection Report, and
- Pay the appropriate fees.



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10. What are the Application Requirements?

The Application (per building) must include the following:

- STAR Program Application
- Completed Inspection Report (or Alternative Inspection Report)
- Application and Background Check Fees

11. What are the Fees for a Renewal Rental License?

- \$40 FEE PER BUILDING
- \$10 FEE PER ADDITIONAL UNIT
- \$100 INITIAL BACKGROUND INVESTIGATION FEE
- EX: DUPLEX (2 RENTAL UNITS) \$50 + \$100 = \$150

12. WHAT ARE THE LATE FEES?

- AFTER DEC 1 OF EACH YEAR = 50% of license fee, in addition to the license fee.
- AFTER JANUARY 1 OF EACH YEAR = 50% of license fee, in addition to the license fee + **Administrative Citation & \$500 fine** for renting property without a rental license.

13. How do I Inspect my Rental Building?

Rental property owners are required to submit a **COMPLETED INSPECTION REPORT** and have two options to have their building inspected:

1. Contract with a Housing Evaluator licensed by the City of West St. Paul. Evaluators are private, City licensed inspectors. They set their own fees and payment requirements.
2. Or, submit an approved Alternative Inspection Report in place of, or in addition to, contracting with a Housing Evaluator for an inspection (SEE Instructions – Inspections).

14. WHAT IS A COMPLETED HOUSING EVALUATOR INSPECTION REPORT?

- The Completion Report is a final inspection report submitted by the Housing Evaluator stating all items marked “Hazardous” or “H” in the original report have been corrected and re-inspected.

15. How Often do I Need my Rental Building Inspected?

- **SINGLE-FAMILY RENTAL WITH 1-3 UNITS:** Inspect the entire building EVERY THREE YEARS, starting from the first year the applicant applies for a license.
○ “The Inspection Report must be dated within the thirty-six (36) months preceding the application date.”
- **MULTI-FAMILY RENTAL WITH MORE THAN 3 UNITS:** Inspect 25 percent of the units EVERY YEAR, PER BUILDING (100 percent of the units over 4 years).

16. How can I Find a Housing Evaluator Licensed by the City of West St. Paul?

A list of Housing Evaluators is available on the City website at www.wspmn.gov or by calling 651-552-4144.

17. What is an Approved Alternative Inspection Report?

Acceptable ALTERNATIVE INSPECTION REPORTS INCLUDE:

1. ANY HUD INSPECTION REPORT
2. HUD - HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER PROGRAM (Section 8) Inspection Form
3. ANY INSURANCE OR INSURANCE - RELATED INSPECTION REPORTS
4. FREDDIE MAC – MULTIFAMILY ASSESSMENT REPORT
5. FANNIE MAE – PROPERTY INSPECTION & EVALUATION REPORT, FORM 4257
6. AN APPRAISAL CONDUCTED BY A CERTIFIED & LICENSED APPRAISER
7. OTHER REPORT - AS APPROVED BY THE CITY BUILDING OFFICIAL

18. Who receives a Background Investigation (Check)?

The property owner, partner or Corporate Officer receives an initial background investigation when the owner first applies for a rental license.



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19. What are the Criteria for the Background Checks?

Criminal convictions that occurred in Minnesota as follows: Crimes Concerning Dishonesty, Crimes Concerning Public Safety, Crimes Concerning Privacy, Building Code (City Code §400), Housing Code (§425), Parked or Stored Motor Vehicles (§2005.21), Inoperative or Abandoned Vehicles (§2007.11), and Unsheltered Storage (§2007.03).

20. How can I join the STAR Program?

For more information on the STAR Program, please call City Hall at 651-552-4235 or view the City Website at www.wspmn.gov on the Rental Licensing page - STAR Program.

21. Who approves the Rental License Applications?

The City Council approves the Rental License applications on the Consent Agenda at City Council Meetings. A Hearing will be held to review applications recommended for denial, revocation or suspension.

22. What happens if the City Council Denies, Revokes or Suspends my Rental License?

The City Council may deny, revoke or suspend a rental license for any of the reasons enumerated in City Code Section 1005.25 subd. 1. A hearing will be conducted pursuant to City Code Section 1005.25 subd. 4. Following the hearing, the Council may deny, revoke, suspend, not renew the license for all or any part of the licensed premises or may grant or continue the license upon such terms and conditions as it deems reasonable and necessary. The decision by the City Council following a hearing is final. Upon a decision to revoke, suspend or not renew a license, no new application from the current Owner for the same facility will be accepted for a period of time specified in the Council's decision, not exceeding one (1) year. Upon suspension or revocation of a license, the owner must reapply for a new license and comply with all the provisions of Section 435.05.

23. Where do I Display my License Certificate?

Pursuant to Section 1005.15, the License Certificate must be displayed in a conspicuous place at or near the entrance of the Rental Dwelling. One license certificate must be displayed for each building.

- For buildings with 1-3 units, the certificate must be visible from the street.
- For buildings with more than 3 units, the certificate must be displayed in the rental office or other common area accessible to all tenants.

24. What Property Owners Are Exempt from Obtaining a Rental License?

The Rental License does not apply to hotels, motels, hospitals, State-licensed residential care facilities, assisted living facilities, nursing homes, high school dormitories, single-family homes or duplexes in which the owner resides and there are no more than three unrelated persons in the owner's unit.

25. What if a Relative is paying to Live in My Home?

Property owners who allow family members to live in their home are not required to obtain a license. If your property is rented to a family member only, please complete the Affidavit for a Family Member Exemption and submit to City Hall, Attn: Rental Licensing, 1616 Humboldt Ave, West St. Paul, MN 55118.

26. Do New Owners have to Apply for a New License?

The Rental license is non-transferable. New owners must apply for a new license. License fees apply to new owners. The application fee is nonrefundable. (Inspection Reports can be submitted from the last 12 months from multi-family rental property with more than 3 units and from the last 36 months from single-family rental property with 1-3 units).

27. When can I turn in my Application?

APPLICANTS MUST APPLY BY DEC. 1, 2014 or a penalty fee will be imposed
Licenses are valid January 1 – December 31 of each year.

For more information, please contact 651-552-4144. OR, visit the Rental Licensing Page at www.wspmn.gov.